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72 Gravelines (*Franco-Spanish Wars*), 1558

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Aided by the fire of an English naval squadron off-shore, the Comte d'Egmont with 10,000 Spanish troops attacked 8,500 French at Gravelines, on the coast east of Calais, on 13 July 1558. A determined cavalry charge broke the French line, and severe hand-to-hand fighting led to a Spanish victory in which some 2,000 of the enemy were killed, wounded, captured or drowned trying to escape. The following year, in the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, France surrendered all her northern conquests except Calais.

**Gravelotte** (*Franco-Prussian War*), 1870

With his route to Verdun blocked by the Prussian First and Second Armies following his failure at Mars-la-Tour, Marshal Bazaine made a stand with his 113,000 French troops at Gravelotte, seven miles west of Metz. On 18 August 1870 the combined Prussian armies of 187,000 men attacked, and although the French around Gravelotte held firm, the arrival of reinforcements enabled the Prussians to turn Bazaine's right flank at St Privat. The Marshal then retired into Metz, having lost 18,000 men in casualties and prisoners. The Prussians incurred 20,000 casualties but were able to besiege Metz and detach troops to assist in the destruction of another French army at Sedan. Had Bazaine shown more offensive spirit at Gravelotte, he might well have changed the whole course of the war, for his ultimate surrender of Metz would prove militarily and psychologically decisive.

**Grochow** (*Polish Revolt against Russia*), 1831

Inspired by success of the revolution in Paris in 1830, patriots declared an independent Poland and prepared to defend themselves against Russia. At Grochow, on the right bank of the Vistula just east of Warsaw, 80,000 under Prince Radziwill faced a Russian army of 100,000 led by Count von Diebitsch. After a bloody engagement on 20 February 1831, fighting ceased with neither side having gained an advantage, though the Russians suffered 10,000 casualties, the Poles half that number. In fact, the battle was a Polish failure, for a decisive victory was crucial for their cause.

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